

THE JACOBS REPORT

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SENATOR JACOBS TO HOST INSURANCE FORUM:

“No-Fault – The Broken Promise”

Senator Gilda Z. Jacobs will host a community insurance forum from **5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Monday, November 14, 2005, at the Southfield Public Library**, located at 26300 Evergreen Road at Civic Center Drive, in Southfield.

The forum will focus on recent insurance industry efforts to reduce benefits and erode guarantees provided by the original No-Fault Act. The program is sponsored by the Coalition Protecting Auto No-Fault (CPAN), a non-partisan coalition of consumer groups, victim’s advocates, medical providers and ordinary citizens dedicated to protecting Michigan’s No-Fault system.

Guest panelists will include: Michael Dabbs, President, Brain Injury Association of MI; George Sinas, CPAN legal advisor; and William Buccalo, President, Rainbow Rehabilitation Centers. Joining the panelists will be state representatives Paul Condino (D-Southfield), Andy Meisner (D-Ferndale), and Aldo Vagnozzi (D-Farmington Hills).

“New restrictions, limits and restraints under consideration, combined with an increasing number of anti-victim court verdicts, threaten to rob victims of their rights and strip the act of its original intent,” Jacobs said. “This is an opportunity for the public to learn how the original promises of No-Fault are being threatened.”

Proposed restrictions include caps on home care benefits; mandating managed care for treatment; altering the threshold injury standard which deprives thousands of victims compensation from negligent drivers; imposing mandatory coordination of benefits; and forcing some accident victims to pay their own medical expenses out of their liability settlements.

The forum is free and the public is invited. Light refreshments will be served. For more information, call 517/373-7888.

EMINENT DOMAIN PACKAGE APPROVED

Bills Sail Through Senate

Spurred by a controversial U.S. Supreme Court case ruled on earlier this year, the Michigan Senate acted to give Michigan voters a chance to impose strict criteria over government seizure of private property.

The Supreme Court case came from Connecticut, where the New London city government, in search of more revenue, empowered a private development corporation to exercise eminent domain. The corporation proceeded to condemn an unblighted working-class neighborhood in order to give the property to private developers whose condominiums, luxury hotel and private offices would pay more taxes than the owners of the condemned homes and businesses.

In approving SJR E on a 35-3 vote, the Senate moved towards giving citizens an opportunity to take extra precautions in ensuring that government will not profit by seizing the property of people of modest means and giving it to wealthy people who can pay more in taxes.

The measure will now go before Michigan voters on the November 2006 ballot. The proposal would codify in the Michigan Constitution the principles on eminent domain that the Michigan Supreme Court established in 2004 in the Hathcock decision that overturned the Poletown decision of the early 1980s.

Passed in tandem with the constitutional amendment was SB 693, approved on a 36-2 vote. The bill spells out in statute the principles of the amendment.

Under the proposal, local governments would be severely restricted in their ability to exercise eminent domain. Locals would still be able to take land to counteract blight, but the government would have to show that the property in question met definitions of blight.

The proposals now go to the House for consideration.

ECONOMIC STIMULUS GOES TO GOVERNOR

Dems: Original Agreement Dishonored

In two long sessions, the House and Senate worked in tandem to pass the bulk of the economic stimulus package that legislative leaders and Governor Granholm agreed upon last Friday.

Although the entire package passed both chambers with relative ease, just what was agreed upon became a subject of debate as the session progressed.

The main point of contention within the multi-bill package centered on the non-repeal the Single Business Tax (SBT) sunset, which is scheduled to eliminate the tax at the end of 2009.

Governor Granholm says that the agreement includes a repeal of the SBT sunset. House Speaker Craig DeRoche (R-Novi) claims it doesn't. Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema (R-Wyoming) sided with DeRoche. Thus, the specter of a veto looms.

Stay tuned.

All Michigan legislation can be tracked at <http://www.legislature.michigan.gov/>.

State Senator Gilda Jacobs represents the 14th Senate District, which includes Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Franklin, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park,

Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak Township, Southfield, and Southfield Township. She is the Minority Vice Chair of the Families & Human Services Committee and the Economic Development, Small Business & Regulatory Reform Committee. She also serves on the Government Operations and Health Policy Committees.

Constituents of the 14th District may contact Senator Jacobs at sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov or toll-free at 1-888-937-4453.

This newsletter is produced in single-space form in order to save paper and transmission costs.

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